A MEMORIAL TO MY FATHER AND MOTHER

Gc
929.2
B388bec

PUBLIC LIBRARY
FORT WAYNE & ALLEN CO., IND.

GEN

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 1833 02503 8206

Gc 929.2 B388bec
Beck, Robert A. Talmage
A memorial to my father and
mother

JAN 30 1958

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018

https://archive.org/details/memorialtomyfath00beck

A MEMORIAL

To My Father and Mother

WILLIAM M. M. BECK

and

SADIE M. TRANTER BECK

by

ROBERT T. BECK

Allen County Public Library
900 Webster Street
PO Box 2270
Fort Wayne, IN 46801-2270

Written and Compiled by
ROBERT TALMAGE BECK
December, 1943

Published by
Dale Printing Company, New Castle, Indiana

733892

LIFE EVERLASTING

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength and I stand and watch her until at length she hangs like a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky come down to mingle with each other. Then someone at my side says: "There! She's gone."

Gone where? Gone from my sight—that's all. She is just as large in mast and hull and spar as she was when she left my side, and just as able to bear her load of living freight to the place of destination. Her diminished size is in me, not in her; and just at the moment when someone at my side says: "There! She's gone," there are other eyes watching her coming, and other voices ready to take up the glad shout, "There she comes!"

And that is dying.

—Author Unknown.

PREFACE

The purpose of this book is to tie together such information as have come to us regarding the families of our father and mother so that these facts may not be lost but may be made into a permanent record.

There is the further purpose of memorializing the sacred memory of these two fine Christian people. In thinking of my father, I recall, as though it were yesterday, his insistence that whatever I should do, I should do my very best. And I recall my mother saying in so many situations, "Never miss an opportunity to do good."

As we memoralize the individual lives of our parents, we wish there was some way of memorializing our home life. Home life is something more than the sum of the people who occupy the house. As two and two are more than four—a plus four—so our home had that plus, that marginal joy and happiness. Our home was a Christian home, not the long-faced variety, but full of joy and creative good will. It would be difficult indeed to put into words that atmosphere that surrounded our home life. In writing to her sister-in-law on November 27th, 1916, after the death of my father, my mother made this statement: "I believe there are no more such men in this old world. We missed him last Sunday afternoon. We so often spend our Sunday afternoon singing, with Doris at the piano and Evart playing his cornet. Will often would say, 'there are no more families like the Becks. We can have a good time by ourselves as well as when the house is crowded'." Add to these experiences at home the fun and happiness we had, at first, in our beautiful old carriage drawn by two spirited horses, Queen and Annie, and then in the fine cars which he bought for his family. Our beautiful White Steamer was the twelfth car in the county, and then the great McFarland Six. How can one express the warmth and love of a Christian home, that is a refuge from the cold and bitter winds of the world, a continuous inspiration to excell, a balm for one's ills and a high tower for one's aspirations. A place that delights strangers, where friends want to linger, and where home folks long to be long after time has done its worst.

It is with these memories, revering the faith, hope and love that came through the years, that I prepared this book.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Miss Iva Scheffel, Mrs. Harriet Zink, Miss Irma Zink, Mr. and Mrs. Ira E. Tranter, Miss Viola Deffendall and to my sister, Miss Doris Beck, and my brother, William Evart Beck, who assisted me in gathering material for this memorial.

ROBERT TALMAGE BECK.

December 10, 1943

WILLIAM BECK

Born November 14, 1862

Died October 25, 1916

3 1833 02503 8206

MY FATHER

November 14, 1862 — October 25, 1916

Introduction

In trying to run the records of my father's family, I discovered that the early settlers of this section of the country were little concerned with the ancestry of an individual. They were not as apprehensive as to where he came from as to what he was and to what he would do and to where he was going.

The other difficulty was that my father died at a comparatively young age, and the writer had not reached the age when he would be interested in his ancestry. Consequently I had no leads and have not gathered together as much as I know could be done should I find the right clew.

There are some things I remember. While I was a high school student, a relative of my father's visited us. He was tracing the Berry ancestry. I recall his saying that the Berrys traced their ancestry to a Lord Berry who came to Virginia back in the 17th century. Baldwin Berry was a highly respected Christian gentleman. Warren Routt, a distant cousin of mine, said he recalled Mr. Berry's funeral. It reached from the town of Loogootee to the cemetery which was about one mile and a half away. He was a staunch churchman, and was committed to the movement of the Disciples of Christ.

In addition to being a good churchman, he was a patriot in the finest sense of the word. Loyal always to the Northern cause, many of his family gave their service and some their lives to the cause.

Though I can give no authenticated account, there is the tradition in our family that our forefathers fought in the Revolutionary war. I have knowledge, but do not know now where they live, but some of these descendents are members of the D. A. R. Angelina Berry Beck was my grandmother's name. I saw her once. She was tall and important looking. Her face and speech exhibited a strong will and a strong character. Though I was just a boy, these are vivid impressions.

My grandfather, William James Cooper Beck, was a minister. He died as a young man. He held meetings all over the state of Indiana and in Ohio and Kentucky. He was ingenious and invented several useful things. He had ability, also, as a sculptor. In our family are some of the delicate tools he used in finishing work. He was distinguished as a musician. He played the flute. He would play his flute on clear summer evenings and it could be heard for miles, so it was reported to me that he often went by the river bank and the community around enjoyed the lovely tones of the flute of which he was a master.

It was his voice however that attracted wide and appreciative comment. An old lady, Mrs. Colbert, told me when I was a boy that my grandfather was a great preacher with a wonderful voice. She said that

people would contend to take him home with them after service. They loved to hear him talk, he was such a good conversationalist and had mastered the art of story-telling. He held many debates over this section of the country and was often associated with the Mathis brothers, John and James, both great pioneer preachers, whose meetings were often recorded in the Christian Record, a religious paper of that day. An old friend of my father's sister, Hattie Zink, told her, "Your father was a very smart man, far ahead of his own generation . . . what he told us then and we would not see, has since come to pass." Through the Beck lineage the women are also eligible to become members of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Grandfather's father died when grandfather was a babe. His mother married again and he had several half-brothers. His mother was a brilliant woman and was the first woman instructor in Indiana university. We have several letters beautifully written to her son, telling of pressing situations, one told of his brother in battle in the Civil war. She was a devoted member of the Christian church (Disciples) and her second marriage was to an outstanding leader in that communion.

Sephronia A. Cumming, which was the maiden name of my great grandmother Beck, was related to General Cummings, who was an official of the American government when Indiana was still a territory. Audubon, the naturalist, records a visit with General Cummings.

The name, Beck, is of Welch origin and means in its earilest form, Brook. We know our earliest ancestors came from Wales in England, but we have not been able to get an authenticated record prior to their coming to America.

The story of my father's life, could it be expanded, would be inspiring as well as interesting. Suffice it to say that it was based on a belief in the good, confidence in himself, a trust in the future of his country and its government and a reverence for God Almighty.

Having to carve his own destiny largely, he developed that independence of thought and action that comes to one who is thrown on his own efforts for achievement. Nothing was given to my father except his strong body and fine mind.

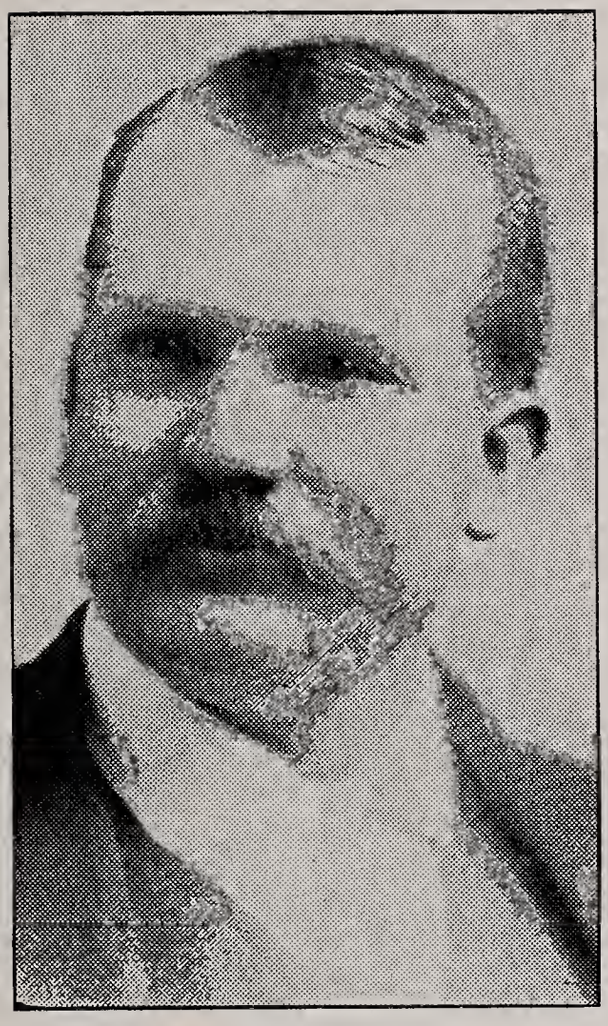
While just a young man, a Mr. Noah Mosier of Loogootee interested him in soliciting fire insurance. It wasn't long until he was bringing in more business than his employer. At his encouragement, he went to Washington, Daviess County, Indiana, and began to work. His first partner was a minister, Rev. Alford. Soon the community became insurance-minded. Those who had been in business there awakened with a start that something was doing. An amusing incident was told to me by a Mr. Ritchie, who was one of father's first state agents. Other insurance agents in the city, when they saw the volume of business going to the Beck agency, called in their special agents and those of the companies my father represented, to accuse father of malpractice. When it was over and father was vindicated, one of the grand old men of the

insurance business said, "If you men had spent your time going after business instead of envying Mr. Beck of his success you might have had more business and this meeting would not have been called."

The courtship of my mother and father, which started in the church, was very beautiful. They started their home, in only a few years my father was recognized as a substantial business man in the city of Washington. As we children came there was great rejoicing, for my parents loved children, wanted and planned for them. And with the coming of each child, it seemed my father's business grew.

In training me in the business, he would often say you must think for the other fellow and think for his advantage, that is the way to keep friends and that is the Christian way. So as the years came and passed his friends increased and his influence grew. "Wherever William Beck goes, things happen." This has been said of my father and it was true.

The business which my father started continues to progress and carries the name of the William Beck Agency.



WILLIAM BECK

At the age he started in business

in Washington, Indiana

Beck Agency Fifty Years Old This Year

Insurance Business Started Here by William Beck in 1887

This year the William Beck Agency is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. According to a statement from this concern, the Beck family has the enviable record of serving this city and community without interruption for fifty years. In 1887 the father of the present owners, William Beck, came to this community and laid the foundations for this business. As a young man Mr. Beck was energetic and resourceful. From the first success rewarded his establishment. When he came to Washington he brought a fleet of old reliable insurance companies and an unusual business acumen. In this early day he did much pioneering work in making the community insurance-minded. For in that day few people realized the need or were acquainted with the protection which insurance afforded. Many of these first companies have continued with this agency through all these years.

In an article published in 1892 in the Washington Gazette there appeared this item concerning the founder of the William Beck Agency: "The Beck Agency is perhaps the best established institution of its kind in the city. Mr. Beck has made insurance a study since 1885. He is fluent in his speech and an all-around pleasant gentleman. His integrity gives his business standing that begets the most satisfactory business. His trade is not confined to Daviess County alone, but reaches out into adjoining counties where the agency of William Beck has become a familiar household word."

This agency has been a progressive business, during the years adding to their service all the newly developed lines, until any kind of coverage and any amount of insurance may be secured through this office.

The kindred business of loans and real estate exchange was soon added to the service of the agency in the early years. Not only have hundreds of thousands of dollars been paid through this office to widows and other beneficiaries of life insurance and to those who have suffered through loss of property through fire, tornado and accident, but thousands of acres of Daviess county land and farms in adjoining counties and throughout this section of the country have been sold through this office, together with hundreds of pieces of city property. Hundreds of citizens of this county and adjoining counties have found this institution a place where their financial difficulties were solved in confidential, courteous and efficient manner. Loans from small amounts to thousands of dollars have been negotiated through the facilities of this agency.

From the first Mr. Beck was interested in community welfare. Not as an office seeker, but as a citizen, he was deeply interested in politics both locally and nationally, and was well informed concerning international conditions. He was a loyal member of the church and a liberal contributor, not only to his particular communion, but to the other churches of the community. In his dealing with his customers he took

a personal interest, and started many young men toward business success and helped many a family to own their own home. He was devoted to his own home and to his wife and children.

With such a background this institution has continued through half a century. The first office was in the Murphy building, later it was moved to the Campbell building and in 1905 it was moved to its present location, 11 N. E. Third street, which building is now owned by the agency.

At the death of Mr. Beck in 1916 the business passed into the hands of his children, Miss Doris Beck, William Evart Beck, and Robert T. Beck. Having been schooled from youth under the tutelage of their father, the same spirit of service, the same exact and honest dealing with the public that characterized the early history of this institution continues to animate the present activities of this business.

Miss Beck is a student and an authority on insurance and loans. She holds a degree from the local high school and has studied in the Metropolitan School of Music, in Indiana University and other educational institutions. She is active in the civic life of the county. For ten years she was county secretary for Daviess county of the International Council of Religious Education. She has given much of her time to church work and is one of the most effective church school teachers and youth leaders in this section of the state. She has musical ability and reads widely. She ranks as one of the leading business people of this section of the state.

William Evart Beck, active associate in this business, is the youngest member of this agency. He is active in field work as well as a part of the active office organization. He attended the local high school and Vincennes university. His experience in industrial and business concerns in Indianapolis and in general construction supervision has been a valuable asset to this institution. He is active in the loan, real estate and construction activities of this concern. He is a thirty-second degree Mason, a Knights Templar and active in the work of the First Christian church.

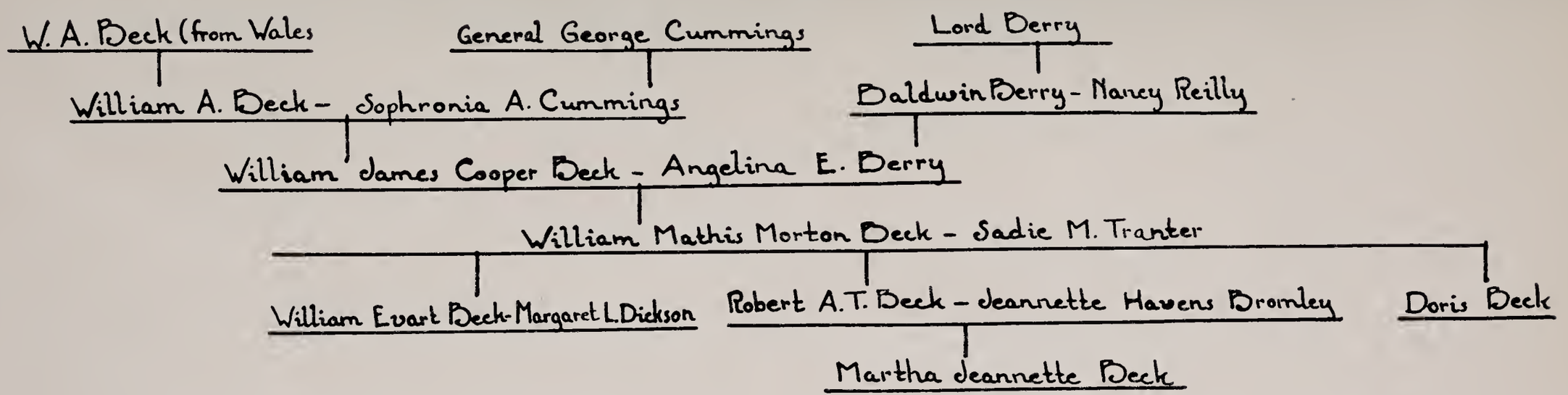
Robert A. T. Beck, the third member of this firm, came into active service of this institution in 1919. He is a graduate of the local high school and holds degrees from Hiram college and Yale university, he has studied in Chicago university, Columbia university, in England and on the Continent. While he was actively engaged in the office work he was secretary of the Washington Business Men's Association. He is a past commander of the Knights Templar. Though he spends most of his time in church work, he has kept an interest and attachment to the business and spends some time each year in active work in the institution, and is a constant consultant on important business transactions.

A pleasant and familiar figure in the office of this institution is the mother of the present owners. Her pleasant and friendly greetings to those who come to the office has become a real part of the atmosphere of this institution. The mother, Mrs. Sadie M. Beck, is a descendent

of old and important families of this section of the country. Her grandfather on her father's side was William F. Tranter. He was an important and influential business man of a generation ago; he was influential in developing the coal fields; among other business buildings he built the opera house, now remodeled and known as the Indiana theater; the old homeplace is now occupied by the Fitzgibbons family. Her grandfather on her mother's side was George W. Biddinger, an honored old settler who, coming from Ohio, established himself three miles east of Washington. His beautiful old brick home was located on the state road known now as U. S. Road No. 50. Mrs. Beck's hosts of acquaintances and friends make her a valuable asset to this firm.

Fifty years of service with an untarnished reputation for honest business dealings presages a future contribution of equal service in the better days yet to be for this community.—The Washington Herald, Washington, Indiana, Wednesday, September 8, 1937.

THE FAMILY TREE OF WILLIAM BECK


W. A. Beck (from Wales
General George Cummings
Lord Berry
William A. Beck – Sophronia A. Cummings
Baldwin Berry – Nancy Reilly
William James Cooper Beck – Angelina E. Berry
William Mathis Morton Beck – Sadie M. Tranter
William Evart Beck – Margaret L. Dickson
Robert A. T. Beck – Jeannette Havens Bromley
Doris Beck
Martha Jeannette Beck

William Beck

By nature William Beck was of a sanguine temperament. He had his gray periods but they were of short duration. No matter what might happen his spirits would pop up serenely like the proverbial cork. He was warm-hearted, generous, enthusiastic and affectionate. He never wanted for an answer, he thought quickly and concisely and could speak as rapidly. His replies could be cutting and devastating as well as kindly and considerate. He had learned to reason and analyze. He was especially good in games that called for reason, quick observation and action. His methods were full of dispatch and yet his life was governed by caution and by discretion.

Mr. Beck had a strong will and had the ability to forge ahead on his own account. Most of his success was due to himself and he would have scorned what it commonly called a "pull". He would sail under no false colors not even for a moment or for a purpose.

Mr. Beck was a man of great business ability. He knew how to attract the attention of the public. He understood human nature rather thoroughly. He knew how to deal with difficult situations and difficult temperaments. He could enter into the feminine as well as the masculine point of view. He was reverent and had high ideals. His religion was supported by reason and then by action. He loved his home and his family.

The above estimate of my father is on the whole a rather correct statement.

My father as a boy showed marked ability. He was the hazard of most of his teachers for when they were confused with a mathematical problem many times before the class he would show the teacher how to solve the problem. The teacher had to be careful about statements of facts, for father had a mind that forgot nothing and many times at the despair of his teachers he would correct them on current as well as historical and literary facts. He was sensitive to beauty and loved literature, but his greatest joy was in working out a difficult mathematical problem or solving some intricate puzzle. This stayed with him through life. "When fourteen years old he read Wooster's History of the World in three days and could tell events and dates of any event you might ask him," so his sister, Harriet, wrote me.

His father died when he was just a boy, and he began to feel the responsibility of being the only boy in a large family of girls. When just a lad he would split wood late into the evening on the shares and then study late in the night. And his mother told me she had seen him slide down the stairway in the morning because he was so stiff all over because of hard work of the previous day.

When he was fifteen years of age he stood examination for a school and made nine months license. However, he did not follow this opening, but entered the field of business, though he continued his interest in books. He was familiar with Shakespeare and great literature and was one of the best informed men in Washington, Indiana. He read

wide and extensively and few men were as well posted as he on national and international affairs. He was a staunch Republican all his life. He never sought public office, but had unusual ability in influencing voters during election time. His interest was the interest of an informed patriot and he held with contempt those who did not exercise their franchise.

C. N. Williams, president of the Farmers Trust Company of Indianapolis for many years, told the writer that he had never met a man who could transact as large a deal and say as few words as my father. He was honest in his dealings to almost a fault. He would not misrepresent anything. As one business acquaintance put it, "things happened wherever your father was." Many well-to-do people today owe their present status to the guidance of my father. He could see advantageous things for others to do and proceeded to guide them into action. He handled some of the large real estate deals in Indiana and other states.

He was a member of the Christian church (Disciples) by conviction. He could give an answer for the Faith that was in him. He backed his conviction by right living. He had no bad habits of any kind. He used no profanity. He neither smoked nor drank alcoholic beverages. He was an unusually good student of the Bible which he knew both in its substance and in its background. He supported his religion with his gifts as well as his thought and church attendance. These gifts ran into the thousands of dollars. Characteristically he secured consent of the trustees of the Washington church to carry extra insurance which he paid for out of his pocket. When the fire came, he turned over $11,000.00 in cash from the insurance he had carried personally and he and mother gave $2,000.00 additional.

It was at this time that he met financial reverses, other associates failed to come up to their agreements. His lawyers advised him to take bankruptcy but he said, "Money was loaned on my credit and I will meet it." This he did successfully but not without distress and great physical and mental effort. But every credit was met. Physically, father was attractive. He had the strength of a giant, thanks to hard work in his youth. He had a high forehead, piercing blue eyes that could look through you one minute and twinkle with humor the next. Father had brown hair but a fair complexion with a sandy-colored mustache and rosy cheeks. He was refined in his expressions, dignified and erect in his carriage. He was 5 feet, 11 inches tall. Though in body he was muscular, his hands were sensitive and expressive.

In his home life, father was most ideal. Nothing was too good for his home. When he was called away no effort was too great for him to make if he could reach home for the evening. Here in the home he would gather the family about the piano for music and singing. His father had not only been a minister of the gospel but had been a teacher of voice and he had taught his son, William, some of the fundamentals of singing. The result was that father had an unusually attractive voice in speech and in song. It was mellow and rich and had the qualities of a bell. He sought to give each of his children an interest

in music at its best. He looked with disfavor upon modern popular music.

He had other personal traits that were attractive. He loved horses. From a young man he always owned a beautiful horse. And the interesting thing was that these animals generally had an attraction for him. He was good to them, saw that good care was given them. His buggies and carriages were always up in good shape. He would not drive a dirty buggy. And later, when the automobile came, he had the twelfth one in our county, and it was a beautiful car, as were the others he bought. He was proud of his home and family and sought always to put them in the best kind of background. Whenever anything was for his wife, children or home, he would always say "buy the best".

The writer regrets that he was not able to get a copy of the funeral sermon that was given. He was a boy in college. But I do remember the theme and the comparison. The minister compared my father to Moses in his devotion to God, in his love for the things of God, in his loyalty to his country. He said like Moses, my father did not wait for the assent of the people but was independent and by the help of God was self-made. The comparison was apt, I thought then as I do now, for my father's influence depended not on the authority of others but on his own independent originality and convictions of what was right and by the power of his own personality. He was attractive in appearance. Many times I have been with my father in Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Chicago and other places and I noticed that people would turn around to take a second look at him. He never seemed to notice this and I never mentioned it to him. He would have resented the reference for of his own personal attractiveness he seemed to be oblivious.

He died too young. Like many young men of those early years he was deprived of many opportunities that are now available to all. He lived in too small a town. The opportunities had to be made. Many men have told me that my father could have held any great office with credit. A man who was associated with my father for years, A. J. Biddinger, my mother's uncle, told me that my father was the smartest man he ever knew and he lived to be 88 years of age.

My father belongs to that grand race of Americans who never stooped to little things, who hated the dishonest, who loved to work, who honored God, loved his country and gave the best he had to his family, his church, his friends and his country. He lived a victorious life without compromising with evil.

Will Beck Passes Away

Death of Business Man Comes After Illness of Less Than Thirty-Six Hours

WAS STRICKEN TUESDAY

Acute Indigestion Cause of Death—In Real Estate Business Here Since 1887

After an illness of less than thirty-six hours, William Beck, prominent Washington business man, passed away at his home, 103 Campbell avenue, at 1:20 o'clock this morning. The news of the passing of Mr. Beck was a great blow to his many business associates and friends as only a few were aware that he was ill.

Mr. Beck was stricken with acute indigestion in the office of the Union Savings & Loan Association at 2:55 Tuesday afternoon. He had been complaining of slight headaches for a couple of days but this was considered a trivial complaint. After being stricken, Mr. Beck was taken to his home where his condition gradually became worse. Medical treatment failed to afford him relief and it is considered possible that pneumonia may have developed during the last hours of his illness, thus hastening the end. Never before had Mr. Beck suffered such an attack, his health always having been robust.

The death of Mr. Beck removes one of the most familiar figures in the business district of the city. He has been engaged in real estate, insurance and loan business here since 1887, when he came here from Loogootee. At first he was associated with George W. Alford and later he was a partner o fthe late Willard Q. Williams. He has been engaged in the business by himself in recent years. Possessed of keen business sagacity and energy born of an ambition to succeed, he built up a business in Washington that netted him neat returns and insures his grief-stricken family a comfortable living during their remaining days. His business threw him in contact with citizens in all parts of Daviess county and he was respected wherever he was known.

William Beck was a native of Illinois but spent part of his boyhood days at Loogootee where he first entered his business career. He came to Washington in 1887, forming a partnership with George W. Alford. He had been a resident of Washington continuously since that year and was one of the city's most substantial citizens. On August 29, 1889, he married Miss Sadie Tranter and four children were born to them, one of whom died in infancy. Besides his widow he is survived by three children, Doris, Robert, who is attending Hiram college in Ohio, and Evart. The date of his birth was November 14, 1862, he having been past 53 years of age at the time of his death.

Mr. Beck was essentially a home loving man. What time outside of his business, was not spent at home was spent in the interests of his church, these two institutions providing his social recreations. Mr. Beck had been a church member since he was seventeen years of age and he was one of the pillars of strength in the First Christian church

of this city for a number of years. He was always ready and willing to extend whatever aid was in his power to his church and devoted considerable of his time to its activities.—Washington, Indiana, Democrat, October 26th, 1916.

Death Takes William Beck

Widely Known Washington Man Dies at Home After Brief Illness

NATIVE OF ILLINOIS

Resident of Washington Since 1887—Successful Real Estate and Insurance Dealer

William Beck, one of the most widely known insurance and real estate dealers in this section of the state, died at his, 103 Campbell avenue, at 1:20 o'clock this morning after a brief illness.

Mr. Beck was attacked by acute indigestion at 2:15 o'clock Tuesday afternoon in the office of the Union Savings & Loan Association and his condition was serious from the beginning. Pneumonia is believed to have developed toward the last. Mr. Beck's unexpected death was an intense and shocking surprise to his thousands of acquaintances, but few of whom knew of his illness. The attack of acute indigestion was his first. Outside of headaches for a day or so previous, he was enjoying his usual robust health.

Mr. Beck would have been fifty-fours years of age November 14. He was born in Illinois but passed his boyhood days in Loogootee, coming in to Washington from that city in 1887 since when he had been continuously engaged in the real estate and insurance business here. Prior to moving to Washington, Mr. Beck was in the same business in Loogootee. For many years, he was in partnership with the late Willard O. Williams. His first partner in this city was the Rev. George W. Alford. In recent years he had been in business for himself.

Mrs. Beck, who survives with three children, was Miss Sadie Tranter. They were married in Washington August 29, 1889, by the Rev. George W. Alford. One of their four children died in infancy. The surviving children are Miss Doris Beck and Evart Beck of Washington, and Robert Beck, a student in Hiram college, in Ohio.

Mr. Beck was a man of unusual business acumen and negotiated hundreds of large and important real estate transactions. His acquaintance was wide and he was regarded as one of the most successful men in his line of business in the state.

Funeral services have not been arranged but the Rev. Mr. Alford, who officiated at the marriage of Mr. Beck, has been asked to preach the funeral.

Mr. Beck was a member of the Masonic fraternity and the First Christian church of Washington.—The Washington, Indiana, Herald, October 26, 1916.

SADIE M. BECK

Characteristic of mother—a lover
of the out-of-doors
(Late picture)

MY MOTHER

Introduction

It was with good fortune that material came to me concerning my mother's ancestry. In settling the estate of Ella Von Wendel much research was made and this brought evidence amply substantiated.

Through her mother, my mother was a direct descendant of William of Orange, the great soldier and lover of liberty, religious and political, prince of the Netherlands. William of Orange had brown hair and brown eyes; he was known as William the Silent. And yet he was able to win and keep friends though he was the unalterable enemy to the corruption of state and church. My mother had brown hair and brown eyes and was an unalterable enemy of corruption, intemperance and evil. And yet she won her friends by the hundreds. I recall vividly at church at the close of the service how the people of the church would come around her in large groups to speak with her, to catch her jolly, witty remarks and she was respected, loved by her ministers in the church who came often to her for counsel.

Mother was likewise a descendant of Sir William Lovelace of Bethirsden, Kent, England, who was knighted in 1609. Letters of administration were issued to his descendant June 2, 1652, who came to Virginia in America. She is also a descendant of Danyell Gorsuch of London. The coat of arms for the Gorsuch family, blazons fleur-de-lis, with a demi-lion guardant, argent, issuing from a ducal coronet for the crest. His descendants came to this country in the last part of the seventeenth century.

Mother was also a descendant of Peter Biddinger who came from Baden Baden, Germany. His descendant, Frederick Biddinger, was a colonel in the Revolutionary war. I have in my possession the cane he cut from a tree and used on his trip home after the conclusion of the war. Mother's grandfather came from Harrison, Ohio, and settled in Daviess county and finally located three miles east of Washington, Indiana, on the old state road, which is now known as U. S. Highway No. 50. Here it was my mother lived in her childhood.

On her father's side we were able to trace her ancestry back to John Tranter who entered land in Daviess county in 1814, coming to this state from Kentucky. Her grandfather, William Frank Tranter, married Margaret Wallace. Grandfather was especially successful in his business. He owned coal mines, large farms, built several business buildings in Washington. He had a beautiful home in Washington, and bought one of the first grand pianos in that part of the country. A certain section of the city of Washington is known as Tranter's Addition to the city of Washington. He built the first opera house in the city, which is now the Indiana theater.

When his son, William Frank Tranter, was married, great grandfather Tranter built him a beautiful home. Here my mother was born, the first grandchild in both families. My mother would seem destined

to have a most promising future. Eighteen months later her sister, Lennie, was born. Shortly thereafter, when my mother was but three years old, her mother, reputed to have been a very beautiful young woman, died of lockjaw. This came as an injury to her foot.

This was indeed a tragedy to these two little girls, for though she lived happily with her grandparents, after their death she had the sad life of an orphan. All the beautiful heirlooms of these great families were taken by the older aunts and uncles, and there is the record that from the estate of these families that were among the most well-to-do, she finally received $30.00 for her part.

But though this seemed to be taking advantage of children, she learned to be resourceful, and creatively practical. She learned to make the most of everything she had. She had beautiful taste and the pictures of her when she was a young girl show taste and natural refinement. All this was to make her a most extraordinary companion and wife. She knew how to appreciate her husband and value the things he was able to win. Father often said he owed much, if not most of his success to her fine judgment, encouragement and resourcefulness and carefulness in managing her household and the property that he entrusted to her care.

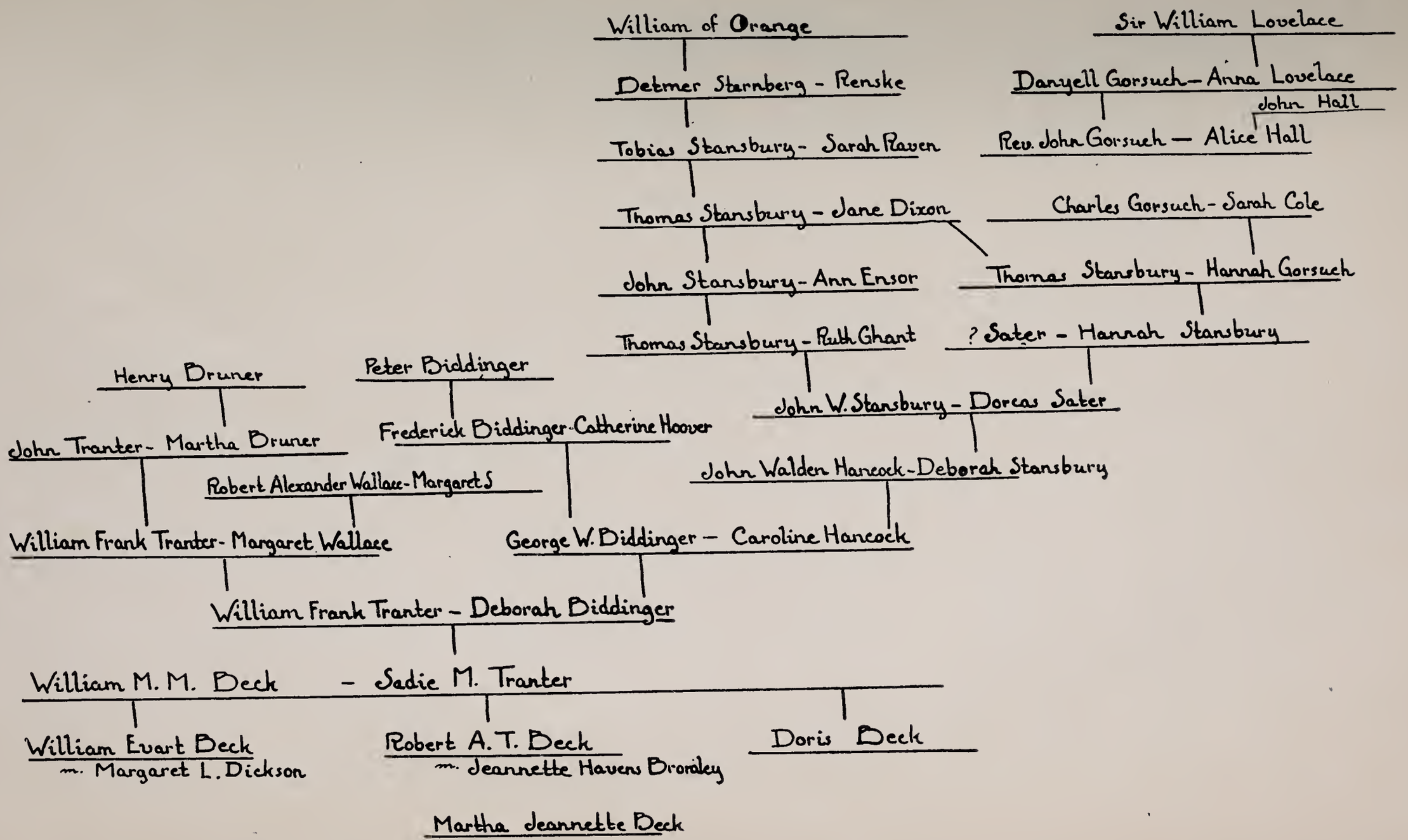
Mother loved her home. She was able always to make an atmosphere of comfort and peace to pervade the home. Her continuous care and love for her children brought a most extraordinary bond in the family. She was always a companion to her children and in a remarkable way she was able to get and understand their point of view. Her interest in others was genuine. And when she died literally hundreds of people came to see her and freely offered their word of appreciation and admiration for her life.

My mother was sensitive and fine in her outlook and feeling. With a few lessons in painting she did some rather striking work. She loved music and had a creative talent for tunes, which for the joy of her children she would often compose.

She loved children and children loved her. She was devoted to her little grand daughter, Martha Jeannette.

The minister, in preaching her funeral sermon, said he could use a text without reservation, as he knew her, believing that she would inherit the promises found in the Bible for the righteous followers of Christ. He told how she had helped in the financial needs of his son as he proceeded in his education in college looking toward the Christian ministry. Mother had helped in the building of more than twenty church edifices in the states of Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky and took pleasure in making substantial gifts, in the name of her husband, to the churches where her son was working as a minister.

FAMILY TREE OF SADIE M. TRANTER BECK


William of Orange
Detmer Starnberg - Renske
Tobias Stansbury - Sarah Raven
Thomas Stansbury - Jane Dixon
John Stansbury - Ann Ensor
Thomas Stansbury - Ruth Ghant
John W. Stansbury - Dorcas Sater
John Walden Hancock - Deborah Stansbury
George W. Biddinger - Caroline Hancock
Sir William Lovelace
Danyell Gorsuch - Anna Lovelace
John Hall
Rev. John Gorsuch - Alice Hall
Charles Gorsuch - Sarah Cole
Thomas Stansbury - Hannah Gorsuch
? Sater - Hannah Stansbury
Henry Bruner
John Tranter - Martha Bruner
Peter Biddinger
Frederick Biddinger - Catherine Hoover
Robert Alexander Wallace - Margaret S
William Frank Tranter - Margaret Wallace
William Frank Tranter - Deborah Biddinger
William M. M. Beck - Sadie M. Tranter
William Evart Beck
m. Margaret L. Dickson
Robert A. T. Beck
m. Jeannette Havens Brierley
Doris Beck
Martha Jeannette Beck

Sadie M. Tranter Beck

February 25, 1866 — March 29, 1941

Mrs. Beck was very capable, efficient and energetic. When she acted even from impulse, she seldom made a mistake and as seldom wasted her time over trifles.

She carefully thought through the work she was to do and made her plans well in advance. She was exceedingly generous and was really more interested in other people and their success than in herself.

She had good taste in her dress and in the arrangement and choice of furnishings for her home. She knew how to make a room look livable, comfortable and attractive.

733892

One of her fine traits was her sense of humor which was very keen. She had the ability to see the funny side of a happening, to enjoy a joke at any time even on herself.

She was very fond of music. She had an ear for melody and could remember tunes accurately. She was fond of composing tunes for which she often composed words. She sang a great deal and loved to whistle. Often she would, on awakening early in the morning, start singing or whistling.

She was very considerate of others. She was tactful in handling people and children as well as old people were very fond of her. She was gentle and gained her ends by pleasant methods.

She had a fine brain and mental powers. She had a great deal of business sense and had fine judgment in handling her own affairs. Her family were very dear to her and there was nothing she would not do for those she loved. She had a spirit of reverence and she was very devout. She trusted deeply in her faith, yet her religion always gave expression in a practical way. She could make friends and she knew how to keep them.

The above appraisal of my mother seems to be rather accurate on the whole. My mother was left an orphan when she was a child of three years of age. She went to live with her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. George Biddinger, and with her grandmother witnessed the tragedy of seeing him struck by lightning and instantly killed when she was only six years of age. He was 59 years of age. My mother loved her grandfather devotedly and often told me of this terrible tragedy. Her grandfather must have been a very noble man. In the newspaper article recording his death was this statement: "George Biddinger was honest and upright in all his dealings, and had not a known enemy. In him Daviess county lost a worthy citizen. The writer of this tribute knew him well and knew him as one of God's noblemen."

Three and a half years later her grandmother died. Mother was the last one at her grandmother's bedside before she died. The last long

talk with her grandmother proved to be a great heritage to my mother. Mother has told how her grandmother would go in distress to a neighbor, often in the middle of the night she would be awakened and, with her husband, mount a horse and ride through mud or winter's snow to answer the distress of sickness in the neighborhood. In the newspaper that recorded her grandmother's death, Mrs. Biddinger was reported as saying: "If my two grandchildren, Sadie and Lennie Tranter, were grown I would be perfectly willing to go across the dark river of death."

For a time she lived with her grandfather, William Tranter, her Grandmother Tranter being dead. Mother endeared herself to all those who knew her and her affection and concern for her sister, Lennie, knew no bounds. Being an orphan, the heirlooms of either family never came to her or her sister. But as mother grew to womanhood, following the advice of her dear old grandmother's forever in her heart, she became more attractive and was known and loved through the community in which she lived. She had early joined the church and she was held in high esteem and sincere affection by the membership of the church. Even as a young woman, older people would come to her for counsel and advice and her judgment was trusted. When she became married, immediately she and her husband began to prosper. It was not many years until they were comfortably fixed and they continued to prosper. She was devoted with unfeigned love to her husband and children. The devotion of the family soon attracted the attention of the whole community and the family life of her home was a happy comment throughout the city.

From a girl she had learned to bear and triumph over disappointment and sorrow. And when with deep sorrow father's death came, she bore it heroically and religiously. It is little wonder that scores of people came to her in their sorrow for advice and encouragement. She had been the encouragement of many a young man and woman.

My great grandfather, William Frank Tranter, on March 15th, 1841, married Margaret Wallace, who was born March 11th, 1826. Margaret was the daughter of Robert Alexander Wallace and Margaret Stephenson Wallace. They were married November 15, 1824. Robert Alexander Wallace was born in Mason county, Kentucky, in 1779 and died June 3, 1843. Robert Alexander Wallace's father was born in Tennessee and served in the Revolutionary war.

It is around this period that the family of General Lew Wallace, soldier and novelist, stem with our own family. Our family settled in Indiana around Cynthiana, Indiana. General Wallace was born in Brookville, Indiana.

After that from whence came we. There is a tradition that we came from Scotland, but my investigation has gone no further than the above.

SADIE M. TRANTER

(Just before her marriage to father)

My grandfather, William Frank Tranter, was set up in business by his father. His first home, a beautiful house, was given to him by his father. I have been told by men who knew my grandfather, that he could have been most anything to which he might have set his mind. He had a pleasing personality and a fine mind. But he lost his wife when he was very young. And many incidents happened to discourage him. One of these was that his father was very indulgent with him.

My mother inherited many of the good qualities of her parents. She had beautiful eyes and an expressive face that reflected in a pleasing manner the feelings her thoughts expressed. She could influence people and at the same time bind them to her as friends. Her features were pleasing, a nicely chiselled face with a Greek nose and warm but refined lips. When things went calmly these gave a most friendly picture. When, however, she felt compelled to take a stand, her large brown eyes flashed and she could speak with a definiteness and a finality that was not to be opposed. And at no time was this so well seen as when she thought a member of her family had been unjustly treated, or when she was opposing some community evil. The prohibition vote for the 18th amendment was greatly increased by my mother's influence and effort in the community in which she lived.

People who worked for my mother came to love her. During the years we had much colored help about our home. No slight was permitted to anyone because of race or color. They became devoted to the family. Several of the boys who worked for mother later held good positions which they attributed to mother's guidance and influence.

Funeral Address on the Occasion of the Death of Sadie M. Beck

By Rev. R. M. Sims

An unusual circumstance is apparent today. Not over three times in my whole ministry have I had funerals when one of the mourners was a fellow minister of the gospel, and two of those occasions have come in rapid succession. The last funeral held in this church, exactly three months ago, was that of Brother J. F. Bulger, and his only son is a minister in the Christian church as is Robert Beck, who mourns today the home-going of his mother.

My acquaintance with Mrs. Beck has not been extended through the many years of her active Christian life, but long enough to become acquainted with her philosophy of life. Often have we stopped to visit with her as she sat in her car beside her place of business. Her physical infirmaties made it difficult for her to get in and out of cars, or to get up steps, but her spirit was strong and her will and purposes unwavering.

Mrs. Beck had a characteristic way of boosting and commending the better things and higher purposes in the lives of others. We have been especially impressed with this, in that she has been a great booster

and believer in our son, Ben, in his purpose to preach the gospel. And she has not only given her moral support and Godspeed to his chosen calling, but made on several occasions, gifts of money to help along in a material way.

We feel that we have now an occasion when we can use consistently a text that would not be appropriate in many funerals. (Rev. 14:-13). "Blessed are the dead die in the Lord from henceforth: yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors: and their works do follow them."

The only way to die in the Lord is to live in the Lord. A fine tribute was paid to Sister Beck when her son, Robert, said a few days ago: "She taught us how to live, and now she is teaching us how to die."

Mrs. Beck never complained though a great sufferer. We believe that she has gone to "rest from her labors", and her works will follow, in that good deeds and souls helped to find Christ through her influence, will be stars in her crown and treasures laid up in heaven. I close with two lovely poems which I deem most appropriate for the occasion.

The palsied worm now shriveled in decay
  Will not be doomed forevermore to die,
For from its somber chrysalis one day
  It will arise a brilliant butterfly:
The rose that withers in the winter's breath
  Will pulsate with new life when the young spring
Calls from their lowly winding sheet of death
  The fallen seeds at June's first blossoming.

And can it be that man alone must pass
  To stark oblivion within the tomb,
When God gives new life to the fallen grass
  And wakes again the woodland's vanished bloom?
Does not calm reason tell us death must be
  A gate to life and immortality?

—Unknown.

THE REASON

Someone has asked why mighty monuments
  Have not been reared for women as for men;
Have women played no part in world events?
  Have not their deeds been told by tongue and pen?
Why should the marble shaft an dthe bronze plaque
  Not boast of women's glories near and far?
Why should the chisel of the sculptor lack
  The cunning to depict them as they are?

This is the reason: Every noble man
  That in the floodlight of renown has stood
Since the first syllable of time began
  Has been a monument to womanhood—
To mother or to sweetheart or to wife
Who was the inspiration of his life.

—T. E. B.

SADIE M. BECK

Born February 25, 1865
Died March 29, 1941
(Her last picture)

Sadie M. Beck Taken by Death Late Saturday

Rites Tuesday Afternoon at First Christian Church

Mrs. Sadie Beck, 76, widow of the late William Beck, formerly prominent in this section as a real estate and insurance man, died at 3:45 o'clock Saturday afternoon at the family home, 103 Campbell avenue.

Death of the aged and highly respected woman was attributed to a complication of ailments, and came after a lingering illness of three months. She had been bedfast since December 21st, and had been in a critical condition for the past several days.

Rites for Mrs. Beck are to be held at 3:00 o'clock Tuesday afternoon at the First Christian church, with Revs. R. M. Sims, Arthur F. Weaver and Wm. R. Seat officiating. Interment will be made in Oak Grove cemetery.

The body will be removed from the family home to the church at 2:00 o'clock Tuesday, and will lie in state until the hour of the services. The casket will not be opened after the services.

Friends may call to pay respects at the family home, where the body was taken Sunday afternoon after preparation at the Gill Funeral Chapel.

Sadie Melissa Ann Tranter Beck was born February 25, 1865, in the beautiful old white pillared home of her father on the Bedford turnpike, which later became known as the home of Judge W. G. Gardner and now is the home of Mrs. Clinton Johnson.

Her family was one of the old and influential families of this community. Her father was William Tranter and her mother, Deborah Biddinger Tranter. Her mother died as a young woman, at the time the deceased was 18 months of age. The deceased then went to live with her grandparents in the old George Biddinger home place on the state road. At their death, when she was 11 years of age, the deceased came to Washington to live with her grandparents Tranter. The Tranters lived in the old home now owned and occupied by William Fitzgibbon, on State street, and there she lived until the Tranters died.

As a young woman, the deceased and her sister, the late Mrs. Lennie Maxwell, were popular among the young people and were very active in the church. While yet a small girl she became a member of the Christian church at historic Bethany church, east of Washington. Since that time she has been very devoted to these early vows which

she assumed as a Christian. She gave liberally to Christian causes and helped financially in erection of several churches.

Mrs. Beck was a liberal giver at the time the First Christian church of this city was rebuilt. On three occasions she gave in the building program of three churches to which her son, Rev. Robert T. Beck, ministered. In one church she gave the pulpit and the pulpit furniture, saying, "Not every mother can give a pulpit and put her son in it." She was made a life member of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions. Though loyal to her own church she had a broad and sympathetic attitude toward all religious organizations and churches. By precept and example she encouraged all she could in the way of Christian living.

On August 29, 1899, she was married to William Beck. A happy and exemplary Christian home life followed. Four children were born, one of whom died in infancy. Since 1900 the large brick house at 103 Campbell avenue has been known as the Beck home. Here her three children grew to adulthood and she and her husband lived there happily for many years.

Mrs. Beck was probably most familiar to people of Washington as the pleasant faced, gray haired lady who sat so often in the car parked in front of the William Beck Agency on N. E. Third street. There she smiled and greeted her many friends who passed. Also they remember her as she sat in the office with her children, at her own desk, where she chatted and visited with those who lingered after business to give her a cheerful and friendly word. She was fond of young people, and by word and deed gave encouragement to those entering upon married life or to those with aspirations to do better.

Mrs. Beck was a woman of exceptional business judgment, and took pride in looking after her own properties and her own personal affairs. She was of strong character, and possessed an attractive and pleasing personality. In her own way she was an active force in movements for betterment of the community, found it easy to make and maintain friendships. She was interested in new and improved methods, and took delight in riding in airplanes.

The deceased was a member of the First Christian church of Washington, and of the Crystal McCord Chapter of War Mothers, as well as the Christian Women's Board of Missions.

Surviving besides her three children, to whom she was devoted, is a grand-daughter, Martha Jeannette Beck, of New Castle, and one uncle, Andrew J. Biddinger, of Washington.

The surviving children are Robert T. Beck, pastor of the Christian church at New Castle, Indiana, William Evart Beck and Miss Doris Beck, of Washington, who for so many years were closely associated with their mother in conduct of the William Beck Agency here.

Members of the War Mothers held services at the Beck home this afternoon.—The Washington, Indiana, Democrat, Monday, March 31, 1941.

Birthplace of
Sadie M. Tranter Beck

William Beck Home-place
Since 1900

Home-place of
Great-Grandfather Tranter
Home of mother during part
of her childhood

Family Burial Lot and Monument
Oak Grove Cemetery
Washington, Indiana

DORIS BECK

WILLIAM EVART BECK

ROBERT TALMAGE BECK

MARTHA JEANNETTE BECK

And one of the elders said unto me, "Who are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they?" And I said unto him, "Sir, thou knowest." And he said to me, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore: Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

—Revelations.